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1949 Air Show

1. The first formation was made up of single-engine aircraft; the second and third formations were twin-engine bombers. The fourth formation was not recalled. The fifth formation consisted of four-engine low-wing monoplanes with wings fitted in the first third of the fuselage. The sixth formation was not recalled. The seventh formation consisted of jet fighters.
2. Jet fighters observed included aircraft with swept-back wings and elevator assembly set high; aircraft with conventional wings and a step in the fuselage; and aircraft with swept-back wings which had a bend to the rear in their middle. Power plant projecting beyond leading edge of each wing.
3. Cargo gliders were also observed.
4. The orders to the crews were transmitted by means of signal lights. The organization of the approach was excellent.

Demonstrations

5. The air fighting, of which details were not remembered, was followed by demonstrations by the jet fighters. A total of 15 planes of the types mentioned participated. The individual planes approached in single file at an altitude of 150 to 200 meters at most, then assembled in a group of three flights, flying one behind the other. The distance from wingtip to wingtip was a maximum of 75 cm. The individual jet planes performed the most difficult stunt flying maneuvers. Each new formation would dive, simultaneously breaking formation. Thereupon each plane would pull out of the dive shortly above ground, and they all zoomed so evenly that the old formation was restored at an altitude of about 400 meters.
6. To demonstrate the daring character of these maneuvers

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[ ] a Soviet colonel struck a house in the vicinity of the airfield, an accident which was later reported in the newspapers in detail.

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7. The same maneuvers were later carried out by all the jet fighters flying in flights and a formation of nine. Former German fighter pilots who timed the speed of the jet fighters said that they had a speed of more than 1,000 km/h. All the former German Air Force officers said that they had not believed the Soviet flyers to be capable of such first-class performance. At the conclusion of the show all the jet fighters circled the field several times, flying in perfect single file formation.

Parachute and Air Landing Maneuvers

8. Four groups of twin-engine Douglas planes flew side by side, followed by two more such formations (totaling more than a wing); the interval between the individual planes was about one wingspan, the distance from aircraft to aircraft, two aircraft lengths. As soon as the first formations were over the middle of the field the parachutists would jump simultaneously in large groups, the aircraft continuing flight in their former course and formation.

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[ ] all the parachutists would land within a marked off area in the center of the field. No details available on the size of the marked off area.

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Comparison Between the 1949 Parade and Previous Air Shows.

9. Compared with the 1948 parade the large number of four-engine bombers participating in the 1949 air show was striking. The three different types of jet fighters were seen flying together for the first time. The 1949 show was much more comprehensive and many more aircraft participated in it than in the previous air shows.
10. The organization of the show, the speed at which the program was displayed and the quality of the performances were excellent and revealed an efficiency which he had previously not believed possible.

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11. Air force officers particularly stressed the small intervals between the planes flying in formation. The Soviets had always been far behind the Germans and Americans in this field.

12. [ ] The Soviet Air Force, which was expanded after the war on an enormous scale, had shown weak points and a lack of experience prior to the beginning of 1949 particularly in the technique of formation flying. The considerable progress made until the end of this year, not only in the field of pilot training, but also in the designing and development of new types of jet fighters and four-engine planes cannot be denied. Not only the Soviet population but also the former German Air Force officers were deeply impressed by the 1949 air show.

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[ ] similar displays of sizable formations of four-engine planes have simultaneously taken place in many Soviet towns.

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General Data on the Development of Soviet Aviation

13. Every unprejudiced observer must admit that Soviet aviation made large strides by the end of 1949. This progress has been made possible after some years of systematic preparation, including the construction of aircraft factories and airfields, the assignment of large numbers of

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obsolescent planes for training purposes in addition to an ever increasing propaganda for the importance of air power. This progress has been achieved in both military and civil aviation.

14. The pilot training is organized on such a broad basis that the success of this work became visible only after a couple of years. But this procedure resulted in the availability of a large number of good pilots.
  15. The most essential difference between the Soviet Air Force and all the other air forces in the world is in the relationship between the pilot and his plane. Each Soviet pilot is also a mechanic, and is in a position to perform all repair work with simple tools. This results in the advantage that the ground personnel required for the Soviet Air Force is only a fraction of that required by other air forces. Even the Soviet pilot officer must help repair his plane after conclusion of his mission. He is proud of this effort, since Soviet propaganda and training follows the line of telling him that he soon will be far superior to his future opponent because of his will power and achievements.
  16. This willingness to excel plays a very important role in the technical training of the Soviet masses. It is not by accident that the unskilled worker is so poorly paid in the U.S.S.R., while the system of incentive payments has been developed in all enterprises connected with aviation. 50X1-HUM
  17.  the Soviets are building up their air force and their aviation system on an enormous scale. \* 50X1-HUM
- \*  Comment. The description of the 1949 Air Show in Moscow was the starting point  to convey  impressions on the efficiency of Soviet aviators.  indirectly reflects those held by former German Air Force officers such as Hartmann, Graf and other fighter pilots who are familiar with the combat techniques of the Soviet fighter pilots and who were deeply impressed by the progress made by Soviet aviation. Graf shot down 200, and Hartmann 301 Soviet planes. 50X1-HUM

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